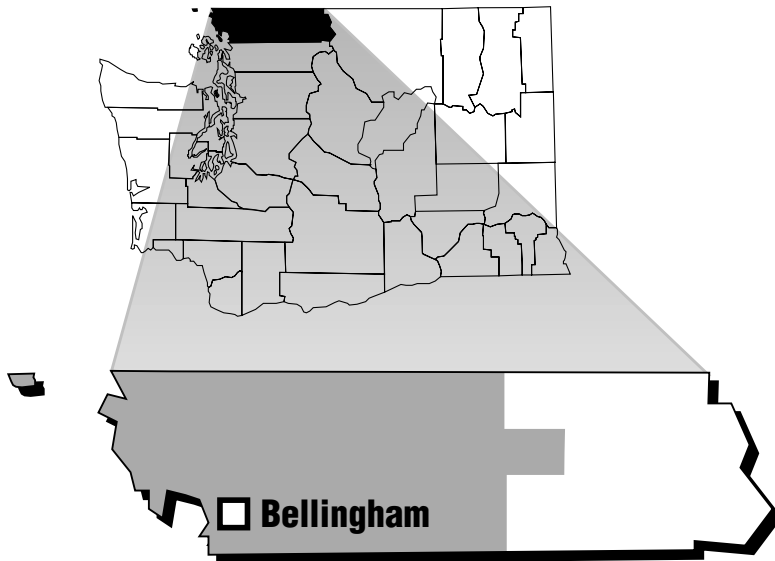


# Whatcom Transportation Authority

## **Richard G. Walsh** **General Manager**

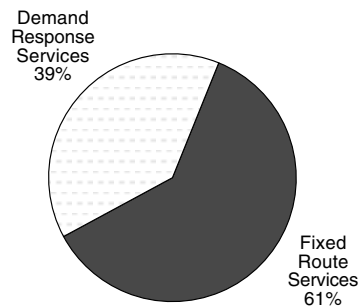
4111 Bakerview Spur Road  
Bellingham, Washington 98226-8056  
(360) 676-6843  
Internet Home Page: [www.ridewta.com](http://www.ridewta.com)



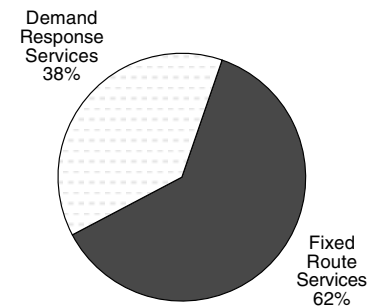
## **System Snapshot**

- Operating Name: Whatcom Transportation Authority (WTA)
- Service Area: Whatcom County
- Congressional Districts: 2
- Legislative Districts: 40 and 42
- Type of Government: Public Transportation Benefit Area (PTBA)
- Governing Body: Nine-member Board of Directors with the Whatcom county executive; one Whatcom county councilmember; the mayor of Bellingham; two Bellingham councilmembers; an elected official representing each of the cities of Blaine, Ferndale, and Lynden; and one shared representative from Everson, Nooksack, or Sumas.
- Tax Authorized: 0.6 percent sales and use tax—0.3 percent approved in November 1983 and an additional 0.3 percent approved in March 2002.

**Total Vehicle Hours in 2004**



**Total Vehicle Hours in 2010**



- Types of Service: 40 routes, five days a week with reduced service Saturdays and Sundays, rural public dial-a-ride service, specialized transportation (Paratransit), flex (route deviated) service, Rideshare, and vanpool services.
- Days of Service: Weekdays, generally between 6:00 a.m. and 6:30 p.m.; Saturdays, generally between 9:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m.; weekday and Saturday evening service is available on four corridors until approximately 11:00 p.m.; and Sunday service is the same as evening service operating between 9:30 a.m. and 8:30 p.m.
- Base Fare: 50 cents per boarding for fixed-route, specialized, flex, and dial-a-ride transportation.

### Current Operations

WTA operates fixed-route service, Mondays through Fridays, as follows:

- Three rural intercity routes (Bellingham/Lynden, Bellingham/Ferndale, and Bellingham/Gooseberry Point).
- 32 small city local routes (Bellingham urbanized area) – 27 routes when Western Washington University (WWU) is not in session.
- Two rural local routes (Lynden and Ferndale).
- Three rural commuter routes (Blaine/Bellingham, Kendall/Bellingham, Sumas/Bellingham).

WTA also operates:

- Five Bellingham routes on Sundays.
- Five Bellingham routes in the evenings from 6:40 p.m. to approximately 11:00 p.m. Monday through Saturday.
- Saturday service on all routes except one local route and five routes that only operate on weekdays when WWU is in session.

WTA provides rural dial-a-ride service, Mondays through Saturdays, in the Blaine/Birch Bay area. Dial-a-ride flex (route deviated) service is provided in the Everson, Nooksack, and Sumas corridor and Deming/Kendall corridor. Other areas of western Whatcom County receive Safety Net (rural dial-a-ride service) with frequencies ranging from two days a week to two days a month.

WTA provides specialized transportation (Paratransit) services to the elderly and persons with disabilities at all times fixed routes operate.

WTA operates a vanpool program and works closely with WWU for transportation demand management strategies.

WTA offers two community-use vanpool programs, one in Bellingham to a residential treatment facility and the other to the remote community of Pt. Roberts, operated by volunteer drivers.

### Revenue Service Vehicles

Fixed-Route – 36 total, all ADA accessible and equipped with bicycle racks, age ranging from 1995 to 2004.

Rubber Tire Trolley Replicas – four total, all ADA accessible, all age 1997 (removed from service mid year 2004 and replaced with low floor vehicles).

Dial-A-Ride – 38 total, ADA accessible, age ranging from 2000 to 2004.

Vanpool – 23 total, includes Commuter Connection, age ranging from 1995 to 2003.



## Facilities

WTA occupies a 55,000-square foot maintenance and operations base. The facility allows WTA to consolidate its staff and equipment, improve efficiency, and lower its operating costs.

WTA operates the Bellingham Station in downtown Bellingham, and the Ferndale and Lynden Stations—both include park and ride lots.

There are currently 101 bus shelters along WTA's fixed routes.

## Intermodal Connections

WTA provides service to:

- The Fairhaven Transportation Center that serves the Alaska Ferry, Amtrak, Airporter Shuttle Service, and Greyhound Lines.
- The Whatcom County-operated Lummi Island Ferry at Gooseberry Point.
- The Bellingham-based passenger ferry services to the San Juan Islands.

WTA serves all public schools, including middle and high schools, community and technical colleges, and universities. Western Washington University contracts with WTA for express park and ride to campus service.



## 2004 Achievements

- Completed the long range strategic plan.
- Signed an agreement with Western Washington University (WWU) for continuation of the quarterly and annual Viking Bus Pass, WWU moved their park and ride from Civic Field to a new Lincoln Creek Facility, and WTA provided additional WWU service on Routes 90 and 91.
- Leased property at the Ferndale Transit Center to the Ferndale Food Bank and sold WTA's previous operations base on Nevada Street to the city of Bellingham.
- Moved to self insurance for medical health care.
- Received a Federal Transit Administration grant for Individualized Marketing and completed the marketing effort.
- Approved a new Amalgamated Transit Union (ATU) contract combining fixed route and Paratransit work groups.

## 2005 Objectives

- Review fare policy.
- Coordinate land use/transportation with cities in the PTBA.
- Implement short term strategic plan elements.
- Continue to review and improve security at facilities and on buses.
- Cross train drivers to maximize the labor force.
- Use simplified fleet mix to maximize efficiency in providing service.
- Begin integrated transportation standards (ITS) rollout.
- Construct the Bellis Fair Transfer Point and design the remodel of the Bellingham Station.

- Make fleet and facilities comfortable, attractive, and self advertising.
- Expand marketing and outreach to increase ridership.
- Increase accountability/transparency.
- Determine relationship between employee health and WTA funds and productivity.
- Continue the delivery of safe, reliable, and friendly transportation services to the community.
- Focus on basics and essentials necessary to cost-effectively deliver quality services and achieve mission.
- Address the short-term service delivery plans identified in the WTA Strategic Plan.
- Continue to aggressively pursue and initiate actions, strategies, and activities to improve efficiency and slow the growth of cost per unit of service.



### Long-range (2006 through 2010) Plans

- Increase service on the following corridors:
  - WWU to Fairhaven, Cordata
  - State Street, the Guide Meridian and Woburn to Sunset Square
  - Around Meridian Village (Telegraph to Deemer to the Guide)
- Expand transit as development expands between Ferndale and Bellingham and out to Cherry Point industrial sites.
- Provide service to Crossing at Blaine and to the lower mainland of British Columbia, with transfer sites at White Rock, Surrey, Langley, and Abbotsford.
- Provide transportation between Skagit County and Whatcom County, creating the final transportation link between Vancouver, BC and Seattle.
- Expand service and hours for evenings, weekends, and holidays.
- Add specialized transportation (Paratransit) to address travel needs of growing elderly population and persons with disabilities.

	2002	2003	2004	% Change	2005	2006	2007	2010
<b>Annual Operating Information</b>								
Service Area Population	172,080	174,365	<b>177,130</b>	1.59%	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.
<b>Fixed Route Services</b>								
Revenue Vehicle Hours	86,337	89,418	<b>91,798</b>	2.66%	97,000	103,500	103,500	103,500
Total Vehicle Hours	90,235	94,600	<b>97,182</b>	2.73%	102,700	109,600	109,600	109,600
Revenue Vehicle Miles	1,223,997	1,278,385	<b>1,315,684</b>	2.92%	1,390,000	1,490,000	1,490,000	1,490,000
Total Vehicle Miles	1,282,604	1,376,791	<b>1,412,436</b>	2.59%	1,492,162	1,600,000	1,600,000	1,600,000
Passenger Trips	3,019,966	3,025,646	<b>3,372,293</b>	11.46%	3,780,000	4,040,000	4,163,000	4,550,000
Diesel Fuel Consumed (gallons)	257,677	289,861	<b>299,027</b>	3.16%	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.
Fatalities	0	0	<b>0</b>	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.
Reportable Injuries	1	1	<b>6</b>	500.00%	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.
Collisions	1	1	<b>0</b>	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.
Employees FTEs	99.1	109.9	<b>116.0</b>	5.58%	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.
Operating Expenses	\$7,261,101	\$8,192,571	<b>\$10,470,398</b>	27.80%	\$12,428,012	\$13,174,536	\$15,414,207	\$19,174,526
Farebox Revenues	\$1,174,536	\$1,145,516	<b>\$1,133,970</b>	-1.01%	\$1,313,363	\$1,318,320	\$1,348,558	\$1,444,824
<b>Demand Response Services</b>								
Revenue Vehicle Hours	52,678	51,482	<b>54,189</b>	5.26%	56,000	58,000	58,000	58,000
Total Vehicle Hours	60,540	58,837	<b>61,545</b>	4.60%	63,840	66,120	66,120	66,120
Revenue Vehicle Miles	771,827	781,906	<b>811,502</b>	3.79%	840,000	868,000	868,000	868,000
Total Vehicle Miles	916,241	867,212	<b>935,109</b>	7.83%	966,000	998,200	998,200	998,200
Passenger Trips	156,313	169,191	<b>186,768</b>	10.39%	200,000	213,000	219,398	239,734
Gasoline Fuel Consumed (gallons)	150,843	146,776	<b>131,369</b>	-10.50%	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.
Fatalities	0	0	<b>0</b>	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.
Reportable Injuries	2	1	<b>0</b>	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.
Collisions	2	0	<b>0</b>	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.
Employees FTEs	63.3	64.5	<b>62.5</b>	-3.10%	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.
Operating Expenses	\$3,951,305	\$3,810,796	<b>\$4,616,304</b>	21.14%	\$4,993,407	\$5,146,947	\$5,382,361	\$5,786,544
Farebox Revenues	\$56,467	\$123,026	<b>\$133,585</b>	8.58%	\$135,590	\$137,625	\$139,688	\$141,784

## Whatcom Transportation Authority

	2002	2003	2004	% Change	2005	2006	2007	2010
<b>Vanpooling Services</b>								
Revenue Vehicle Miles	289,663	273,179	<b>279,861</b>	2.45%	<i>263,000</i>	<i>263,000</i>	<i>263,000</i>	<i>263,000</i>
Total Vehicle Miles	297,713	279,327	<b>287,119</b>	2.79%	<i>270,890</i>	<i>270,890</i>	<i>270,890</i>	<i>270,890</i>
Passenger Trips	58,795	59,663	<b>65,394</b>	9.61%	<i>65,448</i>	<i>65,448</i>	<i>65,448</i>	<i>65,448</i>
Vanpool Fleet Size	20	21	<b>23</b>	9.52%	<i>N.A.</i>	<i>N.A.</i>	<i>N.A.</i>	<i>N.A.</i>
Vans in Operation	18	18	<b>18</b>	0.00%	<i>N.A.</i>	<i>N.A.</i>	<i>N.A.</i>	<i>N.A.</i>
Gasoline Fuel Consumed (gallons)	11,800	12,178	<b>12,599</b>	3.46%	<i>N.A.</i>	<i>N.A.</i>	<i>N.A.</i>	<i>N.A.</i>
Fatalities	0	0	<b>0</b>	N.A.	<i>N.A.</i>	<i>N.A.</i>	<i>N.A.</i>	<i>N.A.</i>
Reportable Injuries	0	0	<b>0</b>	N.A.	<i>N.A.</i>	<i>N.A.</i>	<i>N.A.</i>	<i>N.A.</i>
Collisions	0	0	<b>0</b>	N.A.	<i>N.A.</i>	<i>N.A.</i>	<i>N.A.</i>	<i>N.A.</i>
Employees FTEs	.2	.3	<b>.3</b>	0.00%	<i>N.A.</i>	<i>N.A.</i>	<i>N.A.</i>	<i>N.A.</i>
Operating Expenses	\$293,660	\$298,395	<b>\$323,102</b>	8.28%	<i>\$283,096</i>	<i>\$278,054</i>	<i>\$291,614</i>	<i>\$344,483</i>
Vanpooling Revenue	\$76,706	\$68,911	<b>\$66,732</b>	-3.16%	<i>\$62,980</i>	<i>\$66,129</i>	<i>\$69,436</i>	<i>\$80,380</i>

	2002	2003	2004	% Change	2005	2006	2007	2010
<b>Annual Revenues</b>								
Sales Tax	\$7,047,345	\$13,549,622	<b>\$16,383,267</b>	20.91%	\$16,924,287	\$17,482,788	\$18,059,720	\$19,907,283
Farebox Revenues	\$1,231,003	\$1,268,542	<b>\$1,267,555</b>	-0.08%	\$1,448,953	\$1,455,945	\$1,488,246	\$1,586,608
Vanpooling Revenue	\$76,706	\$68,911	<b>\$66,732</b>	-3.16%	\$62,980	\$66,129	\$69,436	\$80,380
Other State Operating Grants	\$0	\$970,372	<b>\$132,457</b>	-86.35%	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Other	\$15,307	\$0	<b>\$552,731</b>	N.A.	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Total	\$8,370,361	\$15,857,447	<b>\$18,402,742</b>	16.05%	\$18,436,220	\$19,004,862	\$19,617,402	\$21,574,271
<b>Annual Operating Expenses</b>								
Annual Operating Expenses	\$11,506,066	\$12,301,762	<b>\$15,409,804</b>	25.27%	\$17,704,515	\$18,599,537	\$21,088,182	\$25,305,553
Total	\$11,506,066	\$12,301,762	<b>\$15,409,804</b>	25.27%	\$17,704,515	\$18,599,537	\$21,088,182	\$25,305,553
<b>Annual Capital Purchase Obligations</b>								
CM/AQ and Other Federal Grants	\$1,408,088	\$981,547	<b>\$1,071,385</b>		\$1,072,000	\$1,072,000	\$1,072,000	\$1,072,000
State Special Needs Grants	\$0	\$0	<b>\$104,466</b>		\$146,189	\$391,360	\$391,360	\$0
Capital Reserve Funds	\$2,444,457	\$2,352,233	<b>\$1,670,585</b>		\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Total	\$3,852,545	\$3,333,780	<b>\$2,846,436</b>	-14.62%	\$1,218,189	\$1,463,360	\$1,463,360	\$1,072,000
<b>Ending Balances, December 31</b>								
Unrestricted Cash and Investments	\$1,174,524	\$1,470,674	<b>\$5,012,782</b>	240.85%	\$12,872,447	\$11,370,583	\$14,233,345	\$17,862,319
Working Capital	\$3,739,069	\$4,004,796	<b>\$3,734,860</b>	-6.74%	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Capital Reserve Funds	\$13,744,713	\$13,878,672	<b>\$13,438,371</b>	-3.17%	\$13,570,344	\$13,998,835	\$15,205,097	\$16,246,972
Insurance Fund	\$200,000	\$200,000	<b>\$200,000</b>	0.00%	\$200,000	\$200,000	\$200,000	\$200,000
Other	\$0	\$0	<b>\$505,625</b>	N.A.	\$513,210	\$522,832	\$537,341	\$567,577
Total	\$18,858,306	\$19,554,142	<b>\$22,891,638</b>	17.07%	\$27,156,001	\$26,092,250	\$30,175,783	\$34,876,868

***Performance Measures for 2004 Operations***

	<b>Fixed Route Services</b>		<b>Demand Response Services</b>	
	<b>Whatcom Transportation Authority</b>	<b>Small City Averages</b>	<b>Whatcom Transportation Authority</b>	<b>Small City Averages</b>
Fares/Operating Cost	10.83%	7.86%	2.89%	2.56%
Operating Cost/Passenger Trip	\$3.10	\$4.83	\$24.72	\$21.79
Operating Cost/Revenue Vehicle Mile	\$7.96	\$5.75	\$5.69	\$4.76
Operating Cost/Revenue Vehicle Hour	\$114.06	\$90.28	\$85.19	\$65.92
Operating Cost/Total Vehicle Hour	\$107.74	\$84.52	\$75.01	\$57.12
Revenue Vehicle Hours/Total Vehicle Hour	94.46%	93.76%	88.05%	86.99%
Revenue Vehicle Hours/FTE	791	1,070	867	1,152
Revenue Vehicle Miles/Revenue Vehicle Hour	14.33	16.11	14.98	13.82
Passenger Trips/Revenue Vehicle Hour	36.7	21.1	3.4	3.1
Passenger Trips/Revenue Vehicle Mile	2.56	1.38	0.23	0.23